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Portland Woman Sentenced on Immigration and Fraud Charges

Paula D. Silsby, United States Attorney for the District of Maine, announced today that on October 15, 2007, Chief Judge George Z. Singal sentenced Dona Daoud Adam, also known as Amina Ismail-Youssouff, in U.S. District Court in Portland, to 12 months and one day in jail to be followed by three years of supervised release. Adam previously pleaded guilty on June 28, 2007 to using an immigration document obtained under false pretenses, lying to an immigration officer, and two counts of making false statements to U.S. government agencies to obtain food stamps, TANF and Parents as Scholars funds, Medicaid benefits and federal student financial aid. In addition to the prison sentence, Judge Singal also ordered that the defendant pay \$120,917.69 in restitution to the victims in this case. He also ordered that the defendant be deported from the United States when she completes her prison term.

Originally from the country of Somalia, Adam, 38 years old, of Portland moved to Canada in 1993 using her real name, "Amina Ismail-Youssouff," and obtained Canadian citizenship in 1999. However, in July of 1999, she moved to the United States, changed her name to "Dona Adam," and obtained asylum status under fraudulent pretenses by failing to disclose that she was a resident of Canada and had already received immigration benefits in that country.

In 2002 Adam moved to Maine and used her fraudulent immigration status to apply for and receive welfare benefits with the Maine Department of Human Services under the name "Dona Adam." She also applied for and received federal student financial aid from 2001 to 2007 by submitting false applications stating that she was an "eligible non-citizen." The defendant obtained more than \$120,000 in federal food stamps, TANF funds, Parents as Scholars assistance, Medicaid benefits, and federal student aid to which she was not entitled because she was an illegal alien. Adam is also a former board member of the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project of Maine. The defendant also pleaded guilty to making false statements to a U.S. immigration officer in February of 2006 when she was interviewed in connection with her application for permanent resident status in the United States.

U.S. Attorney Silsby stated that her office is fully committed to prosecuting immigration fraud, especially against individuals that use fraudulent immigration documents to rob the public fisc. She praised the cooperative efforts of special agents from the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Education, the FBI, and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Fraud, Investigation and Recovery Unit, all of whom participated in the investigation and prosecution of this case.

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